New Revised Standard Version will be used for scriptural reference hereafter, unless other versions are mentioned.

The appearance of an angel is seen in the stories of Exod 14:19 where the angel protects Israel, Exod 23:20 where the angel guides Israel on the way, and 1 Kgs 19:7 where the angel helps Elijah.

Matt 21:43 reads, "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom."

This aspect will be discussed later in the section allotted to the Acts of the Apostles.


Danter further comments that "We see this answer to the prayer exemplified a number of times in Acts. In Acts 13:46, 14:3 and 19:8 it is related that Paul spoke the word boldly in the face of persecution. But the most striking example of the answer to this prayer is found at the end of Acts... Acts 28:30-31... This is being accomplished in spite of the fact that he is a prisoner" (1989:129).

Arrington (1988:50-51) notes that Paul's admonishment to believers at Ephesus to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) actually means, "make it a habit of being filled with the Spirit" or "be constantly filled with the Spirit," and it implies that "they needed to be submissive to the guidance of the Spirit and experience his fullness day by day."

Weinrich (1981:70-71) comments on the unknowingly sin thus:

The Old Testament speaks often of 'vani\237\' which means to transgress God's commandments unwillingly or unknowingly. Such a sin could be forgiven (Num 15:22-31; Lev 4:2,13,22,27; 5:15; cf. Ps 19:12-13). This concept lies behind Jesus' prayer for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34; cf. Acts 3:17; 7:60).

Bauckham (1993:150-151, note 2) also states that "the phrase can be used of the Christian's permanent experience of the indwelling Spirit: Rom 8:9."
his faith. His denial of Jesus is a famous story. However, after the experience of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), Peter immediately began to proclaim the gospel of Jesus in the power of the Spirit (cf. Acts 2:14ff.). Soon after that, a great number of converts began to be recorded in Acts (e.g. five thousand converts, Acts 4:4). The Pentecost experience and the continual experience of the presence of the Spirit in Peter's life (e.g. Acts 4:8) made him understand the power of the word of God. Peter, being filled with the Spirit, could be bold to witness about Jesus. Acts also records that the early Christian communities prayed to God for boldness in the face of persecution (Acts 4:23-31). Then the prayer request was granted. When they prayed, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness (4:31). Hence, the Spirit's role to grant boldness for the task of proclamation of the word of God is obvious in the context of persecution.

2.3.7 The Spirit testifies beforehand to the coming persecution upon Jesus' followers in the course of proclamation so that they may be prepared to obey God's will (Acts 20:22-23; 21:10-11). The Spirit led Paul to the knowledge of the coming persecution against the apostle in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit lets the believers know the will of God beforehand so that they may be obedient to his will. Knowing the will of God will certainly give comfort to the persecuted.

Notes

1 E.g. Simundson (1992:219) mentions the story of the Fall (Gen 3), the Deuteronomistic History (DH), the book of Job, and gospel accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus as the ground upon which the subject of suffering may be discussed. However, this dissertation will be focusing on the suffering of persecution for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

2 Only an exposition on Acts 20:17-38 where Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian Elders is stated, will be briefly discussed.

opportunity to witness about Jesus by the power of the Spirit. Although persecution is a sign of opposition to God, it plays a positive function in the divine plan as if persecution and proclamation are inseparable. Thus, the rejection of Jesus and Christians and the work of the Spirit in persecution are all necessary parts in God's salvation history. The Spirit is viewed as the means by which the persecuted bear witness to Jesus. Since the Spirit is the one who speaks the proclamation through the persecuted, to accept or reject the proclamation determines either acceptance or rejection of the Spirit. Hence, the work of the Spirit in persecution bears eschatological significance.

2.3.4 **The Spirit's role is to lead the persecuted to an eschatological hope.** The persecuted will face persecution on account of Jesus Christ. The persecution of Christians is to be understood as persecution against Christ himself (Acts 9:4-5). As the persecuted share Christ's suffering in their suffering, they will share in his glory in the end. Eschatological hope is brought in by the witness of the Spirit of truth in the midst of persecution for the sake of Jesus. The Spirit enables the believers to see their present sufferings from an eschatological perspective and leads the believers towards their eschatological reality. In Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7:54-60), the Spirit led him to look up to the glory of God and Jesus. Eschatological hope of glory was granted to him. The Spirit leads the persecuted Christians to the eschatological hope so that they may endure the suffering, looking forward to the consummation.

2.3.5 **The Spirit's role is to encourage and comfort the persecuted Christians to endure suffering for the name of Jesus** (cf. Acts 9:31). Persecution is a matrix upon which a believer's steadfast execution of their faith in the Lord is tested. The Spirit is an agent who confirms the eternal life for the saints who endure and keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith in Christ (cf. Rev 14:12-13). In the context, the Spirit is presented as the one giving comfort and rest for the saints who endured persecution. The Spirit encourages everyone to take the water of life as a gift (Rev 22:17). The Spirit exhorts the persecuted to hold their faith in the Lord.

2.3.6 **The Spirit's role is to give boldness to the persecuted Christian in the face of persecution.** The Spirit made Peter bold to witness to Jesus when he stood before the Sanhedrin to be questioned (Acts 4:8-13). There is obvious transformation of Peter's attitude toward the gospel of Jesus. Before he had the Pentecost experience, he was weak in keeping
sayings. In John, it appears in passion narratives. Matt 10:19-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:11-12; and John 15:26-27 present Spirit-inspired speech as promised by Jesus to be given to the disciples in persecution. It is to be noted that persecution of the disciples resulted from their witness of Jesus and the kingdom of God. According to Matthew, the inspired speech is God's provision. John emphasizes that the Spirit helps the disciples bring the truth of the revelation of Jesus to the world that hates God and Jesus and his disciples. A particular instance of the fulfilment of the promise of Spirit-inspired speech in a persecution context is the apostle Peter. When he stood before the Sanhedrin, he, being filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaimed Jesus Christ (Acts 4:8-14, 21). Obviously, his speech was the words inspired by the Spirit at that moment. There are many other instances documented in Acts.

2.3.2 The role of the Spirit in persecution has salvific dimension. The Spirit's work will result in salvation of the persecuted Christians. The devoted life of the persecuted Christian to the Lord in face of persecution is ultimately incorporated in the work of the Spirit in persecution (Matt 10:32, 39; cf. Acts 5:41). There is a close link between the work of the Spirit in persecution and the salvation of the persecuted. That Christians are persecuted does not guarantee salvation. The Synoptic Gospels suggest that only those who endure persecution to the end will be saved (Matt 10:22; Mark 13:13; cf. Acts 14:22; 4:12; Rev 1:9). The present and the future are inseparable in view of God's salvation history. Endurance is produced by the work of the Spirit in a context of persecution. The Spirit's help in giving inspired speech before the persecutors includes the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus. Therefore, both the Spirit's work of speaking through the persecuted Christians and the believers' faithful response to Jesus in the context of persecution are indispensable elements for salvation of the persecuted. In due course, the inspired speech introduces salvation to the world, too. Therefore, the role of the Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution has a salvific dimension.

2.3.3 The Spirit's role in persecution is significantly related to the expansion of the proclamation of the kingdom of God. Matt 10:18 (cf. Mark 13:9b-11) notes the transference of the mission scope from the Jews to the Gentiles. Interestingly, this expansion was produced by persecution. The sufferings of the disciples became the means by which the Christian proclamation was expanded. In this context, the Spirit is obviously presented as the texts show (Matt 10:16-23; Acts 4; 7; 8; etc.). Therefore, persecution of Christians is to be understood in terms of the sovereignty of God. Rejection and persecution will accompany
the way to enter the kingdom: "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

Weinrich (1981:76-78) points out that according to Rev 22:16: "It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star," Jesus is to be viewed as the source of the prophetic word directed to the churches. The exalted Lord Jesus rules the entire Christian community with his witnessing to the community through the Spirit of prophecy. Christians are persecuted because they devote their life to the rule of the Lord Jesus. In the text, the 'root of David' title functions to identify Jesus as the fulfilment of traditional messianic expectations (Fekkes 1994:152). The churches are expected to become witnesses of Jesus as the Messiah to the world, as bearers of the witness of Jesus through the Spirit of prophecy. It is even more expected in the context of persecution with their refusal to deny the faith of Jesus (Rev 2:13) and with their refusal to worship the beast (Rev 20:4), through the "word of their witness" (Rev 12:11). Hence, in the midst of persecution, the followers of Christ endure suffering and even martyrdom as the Christian communities enjoy God through Jesus Christ in the Spirit. God's purpose for eternal life is incorporated with and is fulfilled through their endurance of suffering of persecution (Pohlmann & Rand 1997:70). It is because the Spirit enables the believers to see their present sufferings from an eschatological perspective (Fiorenza 1985:46-51), and the believers are led by the Spirit towards their eschatological reality (Bauckham 1993:167).

2.3 Summary

This chapter concludes with a summary on the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution from the survey done above. The summary is inductive and synthetic in nature and is produced from the survey of the testimony of the biblical documents of Old Testament and New Testament, excluding Pauline literature.

2.3.1 The Spirit is promised to provide Spirit-inspired speech for the persecuted Christians who suffer persecution for the sake of Jesus. The Gospels present this specific role of the Holy Spirit in persecution in different contexts. In Matthew, the Spirit's work in persecution appears in the missionary discourse of chapter 10. In Mark, the saying is recorded in the apocalyptic discourse of chapter 13. In Luke, it occurs within a collection of
The writing of John's visionary experience is to be understood as prophecy, occasioned by the working of the Spirit's activity (Fekkes 1994:49). A proper understanding of the authentication of John's message lies in line with the idea that the revelation came to him under the control of the Spirit through Jesus Christ from God. Hence, the active role of the Spirit in relation to revelation concerning the coming salvation and judgment draws the recipient's attention to the call of the faithful commitment to the Lordship of Christ in the face of severe persecution. The Spirit's role here is eschatologically significant since the Spirit directs the church's life under persecution towards the parousia (Bauckham 1993:159).

In the context where God is worshiped by the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures (Rev 19:1-10), verse 10 states that "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Morris (1969:228) discusses two possible renderings of the meaning of "the testimony of Jesus." First, if the testimony of Jesus is understood as meaning 'the testimony which Jesus bore,' it may imply that the message of Jesus is the heart of all prophecy. Second, if the testimony of Jesus means 'the testimony borne to Jesus,' the phrase will signify that the spirit of prophecy bears witness to Jesus as Old Testament prophets, New Testament prophets, and the angels alike bear their witness to the Christ. It seems that a moderate interpretation combining the two elements is a best choice since Jesus and the contents of testimony are not to be separated from each other. Hence, the role of the Spirit is to testify the truth of Jesus and the futuristic occasion concerning the kingdom of God in accordance with God's will. The Spirit leads John to show the truth. The Spirit leads John to understand the significance of the response of the recipients of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Spirit of prophecy here is to be understood as the Spirit who speaks through the Christian prophets bringing the word of the exalted Christ to his people (Bauckham 1993:160).

The Spirit and the bride encourage everyone to take the water of life as a gift (Rev 22:17). Only those who hold fast their faith in the Lord Jesus will have their names remain in the book of life. Since the Spirit is the one who reveals the words of the prophecy of the book of Revelation, the Spirit is the one who draws the saints' attention to the truth of eternal life. Then it is necessary for the Spirit to exhort the persecuted to hold their faith in the Lord Jesus because Jesus, the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, will fulfil all the prophecy of this book without any exception (Rev 22:18-19). Therefore, believers are to endure suffering and persecution and keep their faith in Jesus to share in the tree of life and in the holy city (Rev 22:19). This idea is in line with Paul's understanding of
The endurance and faith of the saints (14:12) was their confidence, that sin in which they abandon their faith in the Lord, worshiping the beast, would be punished (14:9-11) and virtue in which they keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith in the Lord would be rewarded (14:12-13) (Buchanan 1993:376). The saints could endure in the face of persecution, because they knew this promise of God. Interestingly, the Spirit is present in this context where the destiny of the faithful and the unfaithful stands at the crossroads of salvation and judgment (14:13). The presence of the Spirit in such a context suggests that the witness of the Spirit is closely linked with the judgment of either the eternal salvation or the eternal death. Then the faithful endurance of the saints is required for eternal salvation even in the midst of suffering and persecution.

Rev 17:1-18 reveals that one of the works of the Spirit is to reveal the truth that is coming. The text documents the prophecy of the coming judgment upon the great whore. Here in this context, the Spirit reveals the eschatological dimension of the events to come in accordance with God's will (17:17). The great whore will drink the blood of saints who hold fast to the faith in the Lord and witness to Jesus (Rev 17:6). However, the destination of the great whore is only eternal destruction (Rev 17:8). The Spirit leads John to show this truth that is in God's will. As John understands the final destruction of those who do not endure suffering as Christians, he encourages the listeners of the revelation of the book to hold fast to the faith in Jesus. It is because this is the only way the name of the saints will be written in the book of eternal life. In this context, it is to be noted that this revelation was given to John by the leading of the Spirit. The phrase "in the Spirit" (en pneumat) (17:3) commonly means "in the Spirit's control" in early Christian literature. Frequently it relates to "temporary experience of the Spirit's power in prophetic speech or revelation" (Bauckham 1993:150). Bauckham's comment on the Spirit of God as the agent of visionary experience is noteworthy for our discussion:

The idea of the Spirit of God as the agent of visionary experience is occasional in the Old Testament (Num 24:2; cf. 4, 16-7), though probably also implied general references to ecstatic prophecy (Num 11:24-29; 1 Sam 10:6, 10). More important are the prominence of the Spirit in Ezekiel's experience of visionary rapture (3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1; 43:5; cf. also Elijah in 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16), and the specification of dreams and visions as the manifestation of the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit in Joel 2:28 (Bauckham 1993:154).
Here, a close link between "witness" and suffering for that witness is noted. Weinrich understands the relationship between "to have the witness of Jesus" and "the spirit of prophecy" as thus: "God's rule is exercised in 'the witness of Jesus' which itself is expressed through 'the Spirit of prophecy.' John worships God, for the very revelation he receives is an expression of God's rule over him" (Weinrich 1981:75).

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit in the context of persecution is to encourage the persecuted to endure suffering or persecution for the name of Jesus. Rev 2:10 says: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." Believer's faith will be tested in the time of persecution. Here, the only option for the believer to enter the kingdom of heaven is to endure their persecution until death. Only this faithful response to the call to faith in the Lord will result in their eternity in the kingdom of God. Therefore, persecution seems to be a matrix upon which believer's steadfast execution of their faith in the Lord is tested. The over-comers in this perplexing situation will inherit the eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. Then John clearly says that this warning is coming from the Holy Spirit: "Let anyone who has an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches" (Rev 2:11).

Rev 14:6-13 presents a context where the Spirit is an agent who confirms the eternal life for the saints who endure and keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith in Jesus (Rev 14:12-13). Certainly, John understands the close link between the eternal salvation of the saints and the work of the Spirit that confirms the salvation in accordance with God's will. The passage talks about the contradicting aspects of the after-life for those who hold fast to the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for those who loose the faith. The wine of God's wrath waits for those who lose the faith and they will be tormented with fire. The smoke of their torment will go up forever and ever (Rev 14:10-11). On the other hand, the saints who endured the suffering and persecution will rest from their labours for their steadfast faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 14:12-13). The genuine 'saint' in the Revelation is the one who holds his faith in Jesus even in a trial situation and keeps God's commandments (Fekkes 1994:147). Here in this context the Spirit is presented as the one giving comfort and rest for the saints who endured the persecution by the order of God.
Peter's reason for his encouragement to endure suffering as Christians is the promise of a rich blessing or reward promised for those who are persecuted for the right reason (YK Lee 1999:353-354). For those suffering for the name of Jesus are given the promise of inheritance of the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:10-11).

2.2.5 The Revelation of John

Towards the end of the first century A.D., the Roman Empire required public worship of the genius of Rome. During Domitian's reign (A.D. 81-96) this became the worship of the living emperor. It was difficult for Christians to practice this worship because they believed that Jesus is the only divine Lord. Then official persecution against Christians increased. It is possible that the Revelation of John reflects this situation (Rev 1:9; 2:13; 6:9; 13; 19:2) (Elwell 1988:1647).

With this probable background, the Revelation of John contains rich documents on Christian suffering, persecution and martyrdom. Like the Apostle Paul, John as the author of this book was himself sharing in Jesus persecution with patient endurance and also sharing the kingdom (Rev 1:9). It is quite interesting to see the notion of the close link between sharing of the persecution and sharing of the kingdom. It brings our attention to Paul's claim that "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). In that sense, both John and Paul recognize a requirement for entering the kingdom of God, that is, through persecution.

Another interesting point in the Book of Revelation is the notion of the close link between witness (the word group of nart-) and suffering or death. Weinrich explains such context as follows:

Without exception those called nartuj 'witness' die a violent death (Rev 2:13; 11:3; 17:6). Twice the phrase "to have the witness of Jesus" (eκείν θν narturián ὑσου) appears in martyrlogical contexts (Rev 6:9; 12:7), while the phrase "on account of the word of God and the witness of Jesus" (διὰ τον λόγον θεοῦ καὶ θν narturián ὑσου) appears in three such contexts (Rev 1:9; 6:9; 20:4). Twice the giving of witness immediately precedes suffering and death (Rev 11:7; 12:11) (Weinrich 1981:74).
name" (4:16). On the basis of this notion, Peter then encourages the recipients to endure sufferings as Christians: "Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good" (4:19). Here Peter mentions suffering in God's will (cf. 3:17). The basis upon which Christians can endure their suffering as Christians is the essentiality of the faith, that is, Christ's vicarious suffering for sins once and for all (3:18) and the culmination of Christ's suffering in victory (3:22). Peter certainly intended to encourage the recipients to persevere in their suffering as Christians for the name of Christ because the triumph in Christ as the risen Lord awaited them (Hiebert 1982:146).

Peter notes the close relationship between suffering of Christ and that of his followers. 1 Pet 3:17-18a, "For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all....," implies this notion. As a matter of logical consideration, the terms "Christ also" reveals that there must be a parallelism between Christ and his disciples as to suffering in accordance with God's will (4:19) (Hiebert 1982:147). However, it must be noted that Christ's suffering is different in nature to the suffering of his disciples. Suffering of the followers does not bear the dimension of salvation. The salvific dimension is limited only to Christ's vicarious suffering once for all (Dalton 1965:104).

Peter understands the divine power of salvation in the cross of Jesus Christ: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Pet 2:24). A significant factor should be noted here—the "instrumentality" of the cross in Jesus Christ (YK Lee 1999:97). YK Lee asserts the important implication of the instrumental function of the cross of Christ for the salvific dimension as follows:

What is significant in these references to God's power for salvation and healing is the fact that it is designed to be manifested in the cross of Jesus Christ. This shows the instrumentality of the cross in Jesus Christ. Were not the power of God working in the cross of Jesus Christ, Christianity would have perished in the cruelty of persecution and martyrdom in human history sooner of later. This divine power for salvation and healing in the cross of Jesus Christ is the reason for the survival and growth of Christianity in the world until today (YK Lee 1999:97).
In 1 Pet 4:12-19, Peter denotes that suffering under persecution is a means to prove the genuineness of their faith (I.H. Marshall 1991a:150). They have to accept suffering for righteousness without fear. Peter's encouragement to endure suffering for the name of Christ is based on the acknowledgement of the fact that the Lord Jesus also suffered (4:13). Therefore, they should not be discouraged at times of persecution. The fiery ordeal is expected to be present in the Christian life (4:12). Peter notes that suffering is not something strange to Christians. In his teaching, the suffering of persecution that is taking place among Christians is ultimately related to their sharing of Christ's sufferings: "But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed" (4:13).

Peter has in mind a definite limitation on the scope of the suffering of Christians. The suffering that Peter tells us about is to be understood as the sharing of Christ's suffering—suffering that Christians experience for the name of Christ. And sufferers for the name of Christ will receive divine favour as the Spirit rests on them who belong to the Messiah (cf. Num 11:25-26; Isa 11:2) (I.H. Marshall 1991a:154). It is obvious to Peter that not all sufferings of Christians belong to such a category, as does the suffering that deserves the Spirit's resting upon believers. Verse 15 clarifies that a sufferer such as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or a mischief-maker does not at all share Christ's suffering: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief-maker." Sterk agrees with Peter's notion on the suffering of some Christians when he writes concerning the suffering for wrong reasons:

Not all suffering should be called persecution, just because it happens to those who identify themselves as Christians. If we suffer for wrongdoing or even for well-intentioned mistakes on judgment, and if these are perceived by those who cause the persecution as social meddling or as culturally destructive, it may be that we are suffering for wrong reasons. If we are persecuted because we have failed to understand the worldview of a culture, or if we simply have projected an ethnocentric attitude toward a particular culture, I believe that we will be persecuted for the wrong reasons (Sterk 1992:61).

Suffering as a Christian glorifies God and bears witness to his name: "Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this
the will of God, surrendering their liberty for the sake of Christ and his service (Bruce 1984:414). Then their response is faithful, "The Lord's will be done" (e.g. Acts 21:14) as in the case of Luke, the household of Philip the evangelist, and the apostle Paul. Knowing the will of God will certainly give comfort to the persecuted. Thus Paul was willing to accept even his death: "I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

2.2.4 The first letter of Peter

Peter who once denied Jesus three times as Jesus foretold (Mark 14:26-31; 14:66-72) became very bold in witnessing about Jesus (e.g. Acts 4:1-22) and he even encouraged his fellow Christian brothers and sisters to endure suffering for Jesus' name (1 Pet 4:19). Peter never thought that the Messiah would suffer (Matt 16:22). However, he came to understand the factual historicity of the account (Hiebert 1982:148). Here, it is to be noted that the Holy Spirit was obviously active in the process of his drastic change. While Jesus was on earth with his disciples, he promised the coming of the Spirit. Jesus promised the Spirit of truth who would give full illumination as to what Jesus taught, such as his death, the resurrection, the coming persecution (cf. John 20:31). After the disciples were baptized in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), they became powerful in the proclamation of the gospel, and also began to experience severe persecution and were scattered to various regions. Then Peter understood Jesus' words and deeds, and he even practiced the healing of the sick (e.g. Acts 3:1-10) and delivered a powerful message before the persecutors (e.g. Acts 2:14ff.). The Holy Spirit had been obviously present in Peter's apostolic ministry. This drastic experience of the presence of the Spirit in his life became a heavy force for him to proclaim the gospel boldly and powerfully, and he was willing to carry the reversed cross (John 21:18-19).

So, in 1 Peter, he speaks about "joy" in the midst of sufferings because he knew the glory of God that was waiting for those sharing Christ's sufferings in their sufferings (1 Pet 4:13). 1 Pet 4:14 states, "If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you." The Christians who suffer for Christ already participate in the future glory, by the virtue of the presence of the Spirit of glory (Weinrich 1981:64). The persecuted Christians are encouraged to rejoice because they are carrying the work of Christ, of establishing God's reign in the power of the Spirit of God ( : 1981:66-67).
Another aspect of the roles of the Spirit in persecution is documented in chapter 9. The Spirit comforts the believers in the midst of the threat of persecution. Acts 9:31 states, "Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it (the church) increased in numbers." The context of chapter 9 is laid where the persecutor Saul was just converted to Christian belief after he met Jesus on his way to arrest Christians in Damascus. As an agent of the synagogues, he was to bring Christians to the council (9:1-2). Obviously, the historical context was hostile to Christians. Christians were scattered throughout various regions due to severe persecution. In this critical time of persecution and opposition, the disciples might have been afraid of Jewish leaders and their order to arrest the Christians. In this critical situation, the Spirit comforts the disciples as needed (9:31). Then with the comfort provisioned by the Spirit the Christians could continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus and many were added to Christian communities. The work of the Spirit in this context could be further affirmed by the rendering of the Spirit as the Comforter (cf. D. Guthrie 1981:530). The presence of the Spirit, the Comforter, in persecution advanced the spreading of the gospel of Jesus outside Palestine, taking the plan of Acts 1:8 a decisive step forward (Flender 1967:129).

Another work of the Spirit is to testify to the coming persecution upon Jesus' followers in the course of proclamation so that they may be prepared to obey God's will (Acts 20:22-23). When Paul gave farewell greetings to the elders of the church at Ephesus (20:17-37), Paul understood that the Holy Spirit testified of the persecution that he would meet. As an apostle of Jesus, Paul was about to go up to Jerusalem and the Spirit led him to an understanding of the persecution waiting for him there. The text reads, "And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me" (20:22-23). It is not clear whether the persecution (v. 23) was that in Jerusalem, or in every city Paul went to. I.H. Marshall (1980:331-332) suggests that persecution in Jerusalem is more appropriate in the context. The Spirit's testimony of persecution waiting for Paul in Jerusalem is seen again in another text. Acts 21:10-11 state, "While we were staying there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. He came to us and took Paul's belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles'." According to these texts, it is clear that the Spirit lets the persecuted know beforehand, persecution was coming to them so that they would be prepared to be obedient to
called trinitarian vision (Kee 1997:103). It is more appropriate to view this as "the fitting climax of a life in the Spirit," not as "a special momentary gifting in Stephen" (Larkin 1995:121). Here, in this context is found an important role of the Spirit in persecution. A significant role of the Spirit in persecution context is to lead the persecuted to look up the glory of God and Jesus. From the narrative of Stephen's death, it becomes obvious that the Spirit gives the persecuted the "eschatological hope of glory." Nothing is worthy to be compared with the glory of God and Jesus. Stephen could realize that "the Son of Man was standing as advocate to plead Stephen's cause before God and to welcome him into God's presence" (I.H. Marshall 1980:149). Because Stephen saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, he could die for Jesus without denying him in the midst of being stoned and he could even forgive the persecuted because he knew that they sinned without knowing that they were sinning against God (7:60; cf. Luke 23:34; Acts 3:17) and opposing the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51). It is inevitable that the Spirit leads the persecuted to the eschatological hope so that they may endure in their suffering or persecution.

Chapter 8 is an important place for the discussion of the role of the Spirit in persecution. After Stephen's death, a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem. Christians in the city were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. As they were scattered they proclaimed the word of God where they went. As the word of God was ministered to people in various regions, people received salvation and they were baptized in the Holy Spirit by the ministry of the apostles (e.g. 8:14-17; 8:39). In the context where persecution was prevailing the Spirit also powerfully worked.

With the official beginning of the severe persecution, the prophecy of Jesus in Acts 1:8, "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth," began to be fulfilled in terms of the regional development of the gospel proclamation. That was also fulfilling Jesus' commandment in Matt 28:18-20: "... Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...." They healed the sick, cast out evil spirits, taught and proclaimed the good news where they were scattered. It seemed that persecution was making the church truly a mission-oriented church. The first missionary work of early Christianity may be considered the "by-product of the persecution" (Arrington 1988:84). Thus, the link between persecution and the work of the Spirit in the context has significant implication for the expansion of the kingdom of God.
you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might show mercy to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (5:30-31). The inspired speech of Peter contains three main elements of the early apostolic preaching—so called, the *kerygma*: 1) the cross of Jesus viewed as a vicarious atonement; 2) the resurrection of Jesus viewed as a component of the saving event together with a component of death; 3) the ascension was to give people the opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness (Arrington 1988:62).

In the passage, the Holy Spirit is viewed as the witness to this message (5:32). The apostles and the Spirit are working together in the work of testimony of Jesus (cf. John 15:26f.). The claims on behalf of Jesus and the hopes for renewal of God's people are supported by human and divine confirmation. The apostles' witness to these things was reinforced by the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in the world. The apostles believed that their witness to the gospel of Jesus was the obedient response to the work of the Holy Spirit in them and through them (Kee 1997:83). Upon the hearing from the apostles, the council flogged them and released them as it ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, when the council members were convinced by Gamaliel to test whether the movement is of God or of human origin. However, the apostles rejoiced that they were considered worthy to suffer dishonour for the sake of Jesus' name (5:41). Then, they continued to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah (5:42). Because the Holy Spirit was on their side as the witnessing partner for Jesus' name, they could not stop proclaiming the gospel, although they faced persecution and opposition. The Spirit's presence always bears witness to the Gospel (Barrett 1994:291).

Another dimension of the work of the Spirit in persecution of Christians is seen in the case of the deacon Stephen's death for his belief in Jesus (Acts 7:54-60). Some who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia argued with Stephen after he performed great wonders and signs (6:8-9). However, they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke (6:10). Then they instigated to bring him before the council. The two main reasons for the council's accusation against Stephen were: first, to the council, Stephen's words and actions seemed to be a threat as to the concept of covenant people; second, Stephen challenged the council's perception of the purpose of God as giving different interpretation of the traditions about God's covenant (Kee 1997:104). Before Stephen was killed, he was "filled with the Holy Spirit" and saw "the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (7:55). Thus, he was granted a so-
initial filling of the Spirit at Pentecost, and now in a demanding situation under persecution they were granted again the filling with the Holy Spirit (Arrington 1988:50). Then the Spirit made them bold witnesses of Jesus.

Hence, Kee comments on the irony with which God's plan and purpose is carried out through the Holy Spirit in the midst of persecution:

What appeared to be a tragedy resulting from the coalition of authorities that sought to destroy Jesus is now to be seen as essential to the outworking of God's plan... There is a supreme irony here: the scheme by these powers to terminate the impact of Jesus has resulted in the launching of his message throughout the world and the manifestation of healings and other "signs" that confirm the divine origin and purpose of the movement. All this was "determined in advance." The continuing evidence of God's initiative and support for the work of the apostles is tangible in the tremors that occur and the Spirit-provided courage with which they proclaim the message about Jesus (Kee 1997:73-74).

The believers were convinced that God confirmed to the Christian community that the persecution and opposition they faced were within God's plan of salvation (Arrington 1988:50).

According to Acts 5:17-42, the Spirit and the disciples take the same role as witnesses of Jesus in a persecution context. Particularly, 5:32 states that "And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him." The text of 5:17-42 is laid in the context of persecution of the apostles in which they were persecuted by the high priest, the sect of the Sadducees, the council, and the whole body of the elders of Israel. The apostles were arrested in their course of healing diseases and of proclaiming the good news, and were put in the public prison. Then an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought out the apostles, and the apostles were told to stand in the temple and tell the people the message about life. They were previously ordered by the council not to preach the gospel of Jesus any longer (4:18). However, they were brought out of the prison and were told to preach by the angel of the Lord (5:20). When they were brought again before the council, they were bold to answer that "we must obey God rather than any human authority" (5:29). They gave testimony of Jesus thus: "The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom
standing before the council for the sake of Jesus must not have been easy for Peter. Hence, it is undeniable that the Pentecost experience (Acts 2:1-4) and the continual experience of the presence of the Spirit in him (e.g. Acts 4:8) made a drastic change in Peter's attitude toward the gospel of Jesus. Peter came to understand what Jesus said were the things that were to come (e.g. John 16:13). Now, before the persecutors Peter could be bold to witness of Jesus, as he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 4:23-31 is also a valuable place for the discussion on the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution. This passage follows right after the release of Peter and John from the Sanhedrin. When the apostles returned to their Christian brothers and sisters, they reported what they were told by the council, that is, they must not speak any longer in the name of Jesus (v. 23). However, as Peter said before the council, it was hard for them to keep the truth of salvation from their mouth (4:20). So, they prayed to God concerning what to do hereafter. The prayer shows that "the early church turned to God in times of persecution, found comfort in the fact that they knew beforehand what would happen, and claimed strength to carry on its witness" (I.H. Marshall 1980:104). Hence, it is obvious that prayer was the first reaction of the early Christians to persecution (Danter 1989:127). When they prayed together, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:31). Here the word of God is the apostolic preaching. It is the message of the risen Lord Jesus Christ and God's saving work in him for all mankind (Arrington 1988:49). The text shows another role of the Spirit in a persecution context. The Spirit brings the persecuted together to pray to God. As the text shows, "the immediate reaction of the group was to join together in prayer. Luke stresses the oneness of spirit which was evident (1:14; 2:46; 5:12; 15:25); the effect of persecution was to bind the members of the church together so that there was a common desire to pray" (I.H. Marshall 1980:104). Then as they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they became bold in witnessing to Jesus. The Holy Spirit becomes their Paraclete, working in them and giving them boldness to speak the word of God.

In the context, it is to be noted that their prayer request was granted (Danter 1989:128). They prayed to God to grant boldness for speaking the word of God (4:29). Then boldness was granted to them as they were filled with the Spirit (v. 31). Persecution brings the persecuted together to pray to God and God favours their prayer by bringing them to a new dimension of Christian life, that is, being filled with the Holy Spirit. "Being filled with the Spirit" in the context, means a "renewed filling with the Spirit." These Christians had experienced the
recognizing that there was something quite different happening. Verses 13-14 mention: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition." After that, Peter and John were released from the council as they were ordered to speak no more to anyone in the name of Jesus. However, the boldness of Peter is once again seen in answering their order, "We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (4:20). The story ends with all praising God for the healing performed on the man who was more than forty years old (4:22).

In this narrative, the work of the Holy Spirit was two fold. First, the Spirit inspired Peter as to what to answer to the persecutors, the governors and rulers and scribes. This is exactly the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus: "When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say" (Luke 12:11-12; cf. Matt 10:19-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 21:12-15; John 15:26-27). When the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees heard Peter, they realized that Peter and John were uneducated to give such an answer to their question. Dodd (1953:82) argued that the phrase that Peter and John were uneducated and ordinary men (4:13) referred to people who are ignorant of the Torah and Jewish law. However, Peter's answer made the members of the council stand in amazement and they found no way to punish Peter and John (4:21). As I.H. Marshall (1980:101) points out, the implication of the narrative is that the apostles' speech before the persecutors was words inspired by the Holy Spirit. Peter received a special inspiration from the Spirit so that he was enabled to reply effectively to the council ( : 1980:100). As Peter was clothed with the Spirit, Peter's mouth became the mouth of God delivering to the persecutors the words inspired by the Spirit. The work of the Spirit is obvious in this context of opposition against the apostles.

Secondly, the Spirit made Peter bold to witness about Jesus (4:8-13). Standing before the Sanhedrin was an uneasy task, especially when a person stands with accusation. It is interesting to note the transformation of Peter's attitude toward the gospel of Jesus. Peter, being the first disciple of Jesus, stayed with Jesus during his whole earthly ministry. Then he happened to deny Jesus three times before only ordinary Jews on the day when Jesus was arrested to be put to death. Peter knew his own past in this regard. With this in mind,
Persecution is a frequent theme in the Acts of the Apostles. It occurs in almost every chapter of the book. It is very interesting to note that persecution is always occasioned by the proclamation of the good news of Jesus. The result of persecution is the expansion of the gospel preached, as contrary to a simple negative presumption with severe sufferings of the persecuted in mind. This section will survey relevant passages that present the role of the Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution.

The suffering of Jesus Christ was in the definite plan and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). As Jesus’ own suffering on the cross was in the plan of God, suffering of the disciples was expected in the plan. Persecution and opposition against Jesus' followers was definitely coming. However, the Spirit's leading role in the mission of God was already planned in the undeniable fact of the coming persecution and opposition of the Christians. The Acts of the Apostles showed the sovereign rule of God in His mission and the leading role of the Spirit in the proclamation of the good news about Jesus the Messiah. It is commonly understood that Acts 1:8 outlines the whole program of the expansion of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the book (Barrett 1994:61). In the course of the expansion of the gospel of Jesus, the close link between persecution and the presence of the Spirit are seen inseparable in the Acts of the Apostles. These two aspects are closely tied throughout the book.

Acts chapter 4 is one of the significant places for the discussion on the role of the Spirit in the context of persecution of Christians. Chapter 4 documents the first outbreak of persecution against the Christians (Danter 1989:104). Persecution of the Christians came from the Jewish religious leaders. Acts 4:1-3 shows that the reason that Peter and John were put into prison was that they taught and proclaimed that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. Here the reference to Jesus caught the attention of the Jewish authorities (Barrett 1994:220). Peter and John were standing before the rulers, elders and scribes who gathered together to inquire. When they asked, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" (Acts 4:7), Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, answered them, "This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved" (4:11-12). Peter's defence, being filled with the Spirit, became an occasion for proclamation (Cunningham 1997:188). The immediate response to Peter's answer was amazement in
persecutors. Thus, the work of the Spirit in the context of persecution results in the faithful response of the disciples to the gospel truth. That the prophetic inspiration of the Spirit demands the hearer's response to Christ is inevitable in this biblical context. The Spirit of truth continues to illumine the minds of the followers of Jesus to continue the same ministry of Jesus in the church—the proclamation of the kingdom of God. The persecution context is no exception to that task.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would stand in his place for his disciples. Thus, the Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9; Phil 1:19; 1 Pet 1:11), the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7) and the Spirit of God's Son (Gal 4:6). The Spirit will come to the disciples as the Advocate (John 14:16, 26). The coming of the Spirit, however, will "not exclude Christ but instead make real to us his continual presence and fellowship" (John 14:21-23) (Rea 1992:155). The Spirit is mentioned as "another Advocate." The Spirit has come to the earth to be the advocate to help the followers of Jesus stand firm in their faith in the Lord in the face of the world's hatred and persecution (John 15:18-27; 16:8-11). For John, this Spirit is the Spirit of truth since the Spirit leads to the fullness of understanding of the revelation concerning God, Christ and salvation. This becomes the fundamental foundation upon which the persecuted disciples stand firm in their faith of the Lord Jesus. The knowledge and understanding provided by the Spirit of truth makes the disciples comforted in the midst of their sufferings, persecution and opposition from the world. Hence, the Spirit is also called the Comforter.

Jesus warns his disciples that they will meet persecution for the sake of his name. The primitive Christian believers regarded their sufferings and persecution as having eschatological significance (John 16:21; 16:33; cf. Rev 7:14) (Mattill 1979:535). Their having eschatological perspective in the midst of persecution is related to their understanding of the meaning of genuine belief in the Lord Jesus. John speaks that "Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son" (1 John 5:10). This is the testimony of the indwelling Spirit and this notion is supported by Paul in Rom 8:16, "It is that very Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Hoy 1987:21). Hence, eschatological hope is brought in by the witness of the Spirit of truth in the midst of persecution for the sake of Jesus.
1993:487). In the context of the world's hatred and persecution against the disciples of Jesus, the work of the Spirit is presented. John 15:26-27 speaks that "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning." In the text, witness-bearing or testifying suggests that there underlies a specific context where stating the truth is necessary in a difficult situation. In other words, the context suggests that there exists tension between the world of hatred and the word of truth (Brodie 1993:489). The Spirit's task is to testify to Jesus in the context of persecution of the disciples of Jesus. The Spirit bears witness concerning Jesus and the disciples are also to be witnesses of Jesus with the help of the Advocate. According to the text, the Spirit helps the disciples to bring the truth of the revelation of Jesus to the world that hates God and Jesus and his disciples. Here the emphasis is on Jesus' words being the primary way of resisting the world's persecution. The realm of hatred from the world is to be countered through the word (Brodie 1993:487). Therefore, John emphasized the Spirit as the Spirit of truth. The work of the Spirit in the midst of persecution of the disciples is to be understood in this regard in John's Gospel. Then the work of the Spirit in persecution becomes inevitable in this context.

According to John 16:13, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come," the Spirit of truth will lead the disciples to understand all the truth. Beasley-Murray argues that the content of what the Spirit is to convey to the disciples is "the one revelation of God in Christ." He further argues that, "the significance of v 13 is its acknowledgment that the Spirit participates in the task of communicating the revelation to the Church by virtue of his relation to Jesus, just as Jesus communicated it by virtue of his relation to the Father" (Beasley-Murray 1987:283). As John's concern in the Gospel is how Jesus will be present among his disciples as they continue to live in this world of hatred against Christian communities, the Spirit is emphasized as a life-giving and guiding power in the community with the emphasis of the Spirit's interpretative work (Smith 1999:38-39).

Hence, the Spirit's task is to disclose the revelation made known in Jesus to the world. Therefore, the task of the Spirit is to be understood in terms of the prophetic ministry (Beasley-Murray 1987:290) in the midst of persecution of the disciples. The Spirit enables the disciples to understand the revelation of Jesus. Then the understanding of the gospel truth enables them to stand firm in the faith in Jesus, as they continue to testify of Jesus before the
the Apostles. Thus, the suffering and persecution that the disciples faced only kept alive their eschatological hope for the kingdom of God.

2.2.2 The gospel according to John

The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles show that the Jewish communities in Palestine and other cities of the Greek East drew Roman political powers into the persecution of the Christian communities (Potter 1992:232). As the hour when Jesus was to be crucified on the cross approached, Jesus began to reveal to his disciples his coming death and the coming persecution upon his disciples. John 15:18-19 tells of the two main reasons for the world's persecution of Jesus' disciples. The world hated Jesus and as a consequence of their hatred for Jesus they hated the disciples through their connection with Jesus. The disciples did not belong to the world. This estrangement becomes another cause for which the world hated Jesus' disciples (cf. John 7:7). John 15:21 mentions other two reasons for the persecution of the disciples. The disciples will be persecuted on account of Jesus' name. They will be persecuted because the persecutors do not know God who sent Jesus. Jesus' words that "Servants are not greater than their master" (John 15:20; cf. John 13:16) imply that believers will share in the rejection and persecution of Jesus. Matthew 10:24 and Luke 6:40 also agree with this connotation. Therefore, the mission of the church as the agent to carry on Jesus' mission is expected to have the same response from the world: rejection and persecution (cf. John 12:44-50) (Barrett 1978:480; Beasley-Murray 1987:276; Bruce 1983:313).

Here, the world's negative response to the words of God results in its sin against God himself. Beasley-Murray comments on that thus:

The guilt of the world consists in its rejection of the revelation brought by Jesus, and since that revelation is from God it entails the rejection of God himself, which is direct sin (15:22). Moreover the works of Jesus are God's works in and through him; hence it can be said that the world has "seen" God, i.e., seen him in action in the person of his Son, but its response has been to hate both the Son and the Father in him (15:24) (Beasley-Murray 1987:276).

Brodie suggests that Jesus' discourse on the world's hatred is to be understood to refer to "the entire struggle between evil and good, between the world and the agents of God" (Brodie
continued by the disciples, as they become the mouth of Jesus giving the inspired testimony to Jesus. In the Old Testament sofı́a (wisdom) is often regarded as the inspiration of the Spirit in association with prophecy (cf. [LXX] Exod 28:3; 31:3; 35:31,35; 36:1,2; Isa 11:2) (cf. Menzies 1994:57; Weinrich 1981:20-21). Hence, in the context, divinely inspired speech is to be understood in line with the divine gift that is to be given for the special task of witnessing to Jesus even in the context of persecution.

Thus, the text concerns itself with the activity of testifying to the Gospel in the midst of opposition and persecution. Luke's edition of the Markan text of 13:9a, in his text 21:12b, as to being brought to synagogues to be questioned, draws the readers' attention to the apostles' imprisonment accounts in the Acts of the Apostles (e.g. Acts 5:19; 12:4-5; 16:23). The record that Jesus' disciples are brought before kings and governors for the name of Jesus (21:12b) looks forward to its fulfilment in various accounts in Acts (e.g. 12:1; 25:13-26:30; 23:24-24:10; 26:30). And the inspired speech to be given by the Spirit in time of persecution before rulers and governors (Luke 12:12; 21:15) sees its fulfilment in various Acts accounts (e.g. Acts 4:1-22). With this notion of prediction of the coming persecution upon Jesus' disciples, the promise of the inspired speech to be given by the Spirit, and the fulfilment of both persecution and the work of the Spirit in persecution, Squires argues that these events display "the outworking of the plan of God as it has been announced by the prophet Jesus and as it comes to fruition in history" (Squires 1993:147-148). Thus the rejection of Jesus and that of his disciples, and the persecution of Christians, are all the necessary parts of God's plan (Valiquette 1998:438).

To support his argument, Squires involves Josephus. Josephus' achievement in relating the fulfilment of prophecy to divine providence is seen in his association of the fulfilment of the prophecies of Daniel with the historical data (Squires 1993:154). The apocalyptic nature of the narrative in the passage involves the idea that it is concerned with eschatology (Craddock 1990:243). However, it is to be noted that the beginning of the end has already begun, but the consummation of the end is yet to come (Luke 21:7-11) (cf. Ladd 1959; Mattill 1979:535). In this transitional time, the mission is an indispensable part of the eschatological program of God and persecution of those who have faith in the Lord and continue Jesus' task in the power of the Holy Spirit is an indispensable ingredient in the given special task. Believers were scattered in various directions by the persecution which was foretold by Jesus. However, the result was only the expansion of the good news of God's kingdom as it is set out in the Acts of
According to this text, Jesus promised the coming of the Spirit after he leaves the disciples on earth. Jesus seemed to mean that his going away would be advantageous to his disciples. Jesus proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God in his earthly ministry. Then he promised his disciples that when the Spirit comes, the Spirit will give them "understanding" as to "all" that he taught about the kingdom of God. Therefore, his going away was advantageous to the disciples.

Therefore, the disciples were not to worry about their own life in such a situation of threatening persecution (cf. Luke 8:14; 9:24; 12:22-26). All trials and persecution for the sake of loyalty to Jesus will be recognized by Jesus before God in heaven for their steadfast trust in the Lord (Evans 1990:195). To worry is a temptation leading to repudiate his or her faith in the Lord. However, Jesus promised the help of the Holy Spirit in times of persecution so that the disciples could continue to carry on their faithful confession, and give proper words inspired by the Spirit to governors and rulers, and retain their faith in Jesus, and finally preserve their salvation in the Lord (see Nolland 1993:682).

Another text that sheds light on the discussion of the role of the Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution is laid in 21:7-19, in particular 21:12-19. Luke 21:15 is in some aspects different from Matt 10:20, Mark 13:11, and Luke 12:12. In these three texts, the Spirit is the subject who gives the inspired words to the persecuted. However, Luke 21:15 presents Jesus as the giver of the inspired speech. It reads: "For I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict." In Matt 10:20, Mark 13:11, and Luke 12:12, the Spirit is the one who speaks through the disciples, but in Luke 21:15 Jesus is the one who speaks through them (cf. I.H. Marshall 1978; Weinrich 1981:20-21). In comparison these two different groups of biblical texts, present the same context of persecution, and suggest the identification of Jesus and the Spirit. Both Jesus and the Spirit are the subjects who will give the inspired speech to the persecuted who endure suffering for the name of Jesus.

In the text, the disciples' task is to stand before kings and governors as the mouth of Jesus. In the Old Testament stó̂ma (mouth) is a common expression referring to the task of the prophets in delivering the inspired words to the people of Israel (cf. Exod 4:15). In this Lukan text, Jesus is the one who gives the inspired speech to his disciples who are in the midst of persecution for his name's sake. Jesus' mission of proclamation of the kingdom is to be
those who reject the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection, as it is inspired by the Spirit of God. Shelton (1991:102) observes the different synoptic contexts of the saying. He comments that Matthew and Mark understand the phrase "to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit" as to call good evil and evil good, but in Luke it means failure to witness when called upon to do so. Nolland's (1993:680) profound observation is right when he states, "Rejection of Jesus in his historical ministry is forgivable, but not the rejection of the witness of the Spirit in and through the present witness of Christians; ... not (yet) believing is forgivable, but apostasy, where the known experience of salvation through the Spirit is repudiated, is not" (see also Sweetland 1984:73-74). Accordingly, Menzies (1994:166) argues that "a word against the Son of Man" refers to the unbeliever's rejection of Jesus, while the phrase "blasphemes against the Holy Spirit" denotes the believer's rejection of the inspiration of the Spirit and denial of Jesus in the midst of persecution. Hence, the relationship between the present and the future of God's purpose is emphasized in view of God's salvation history (Green 1997:483).

The passage says that the Holy Spirit is the one who teaches the persecuted what to speak at the moment of persecution before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities. The Spirit's role here in a persecution context is to lead and teach the persecuted to say rightly inspired words to those who persecute. Acknowledgement of the Lord before others, as the profession of their steadfast love for and devotion to the Lord Jesus in the context of persecution, will lead people to salvation and to God's presence. Thus, it is obvious that the Spirit leads and teaches God's people in times of persecution to be able to profess the Lord Jesus with inspired wisdom and knowledge. Hence, in the context, the Spirit is viewed as the means by which the persecuted bear witness to Jesus in persecution (Menzies 1994:166). Then this occasion is ultimately related to the eternal salvation brought about with the witness that the persecuted bear.

Here an emphasis is laid on the fact that the Spirit now becomes the major person after Jesus in the work for salvation of the people of God in terms of the "disposition of eschatological forgiveness." The transition of the ministry of Jesus to the Spirit is suggested. It is now understood that "the ministry of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit" will be continued in terms of "the gift of the Spirit in the life of the church" (Nolland 1993:679-680). Then this notion agrees with the statement in John 16:7, "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."
be denied before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say (Luke 12:8-12).

An interesting notion in the text is that there is a close relationship between persecution and salvation and judgment. According to this passage, persecution leads some to judgment and others to salvation. In this particular context, the Holy Spirit is regarded as standing between the two opposite destinations of the respondents to the gospel of Jesus. Whether they meet salvation or judgment depends on their response to the gospel of Jesus. Only faithful response to the gospel will result in salvation. This critically decisive moment includes with no exception the moment of suffering or persecution.

The text reveals the role of the Spirit in persecution of the Christians in an eschatological dimension. Weinrich suggests the eschatological decisiveness as to the nature of the work of the Spirit in persecution as follows:

The very presence of the Holy Spirit brings eschatological decisiveness with it. It is the Spirit who speaks the proclamation through the disciple. Therefore, to accept or reject the proclamation is to accept or reject the Spirit. This is also the import of the saying concerning blasphemy against the Holy Spirit mentioned in Luke 12:10 (Weinrich 1981:20).

The access to eternal life is related to his or her steadfast response to the faith in the Lord in the particular context of persecution (cf. Acts 14:22; 4:12). The text of Luke 12:8-12 says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, while a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven. An example of the "denial" in verse 9 is probably what Peter did (Luke 22:57-61). The denial was not irrevocably sinful (Nolland 1993:679). Peter's denial was forgiven at his repentance and he was even used mightily after his Pentecost experience with the Holy Spirit as expressed in the various accounts of the Acts of the Apostles (e.g. Acts 2:14-36; 3:1-26). Evans (1990:195) comments that the context suggests that "blasphemes against the Holy Spirit" refers to the rejection of the gospel. Because the Holy Spirit is now present in the proclamation of the gospel in a mighty way (Acts 2:4-18), there is no excuse for
An epilogue of the passage is an exhortation to endurance through suffering and persecution. "On account of my name" in verse 13 alludes to the disciples' faithful confession of Jesus as the Christ. And "the end" refers to one's own end in case of martyrdom, not to the end of the present age as in 13:7 (Gundry 1993:740). The believer's faithful response to the faith in the Lord Jesus will result in his or her salvation (13:13). Their suffering or persecution has no value in itself. They suffer because they believe in Jesus and proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God. Only in this case, the suffering of Jesus' followers stands in positive value. Dowd's concept of suffering in the gospel of Mark draws our attention:

It should be noted that the suffering that is identified in the Markan narratives as a part of following Jesus is always suffering or persecution related to one's identification as a Christian: "for my sake and the gospels" (8:35, 10:29); "for my sake" (13:9); "on account of the word" (4:17). Thus, it is not suffering in general that has positive value for disciples, but readiness to endure persecution for one's Christian confession (Dowd 1988:134-135).  

The faithful response to faith in the Lord Jesus makes the persecution worth enduring in the course of salvation of the persecuted (cf. Acts 5:41). According to the passage, the endurance is produced by the work of the Spirit in a persecution context. Therefore, the role of the Spirit in persecution is to be considered very significantly. In the context, the Spirit works as inspiring the words to the persecuted. That work produces confidence in the persecuted so that they can endure suffering and persecution. The inspired speech becomes the proclamation of the good news. Then it brings salvation to both the persecuted and the world. Hence, the role of the Spirit in the midst of Christian suffering and persecution has an eschatologically significant salvific dimension.

2.2.1.3 The gospel according to Luke

An important passage for the discussion on the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution is Luke 12:8-12. This text is parallel to Matt 10:16-23 and Mark 13:9-13. In the passage, Jesus told his disciples:

And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but whoever denies me before others will
2.2.1.2 The gospel according to Mark

Mark 13:9-13 documents a relevant content for the discussion on the role of the Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution. In verse 13, Jesus mentions that the reason why the disciples will be hated by all and will be arrested is that they profess the name of Jesus. Their faith in the Lord Jesus will be the ultimate cause of their suffering and persecution. In relation to this section of Jesus' prediction of the coming persecution upon his disciples, the announcement of his own suffering and death (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34) functions as a clear prediction of the same fate for his disciples in terms of suffering. Thus, it is clearly presented throughout Mark's Gospel that not only Jesus, but also the followers will be called upon to suffer (Dowd 1988:133).

The centrality of the passage is verses 9b-11: "...you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations." It is notable to see an irony in that the persecution of the disciples turned out to be the way through which the good news of salvation is proclaimed. The moment when the disciples stand before the synagogues, governors and kings for the accusation, becomes the opportune time to confess their faith in the Lord Jesus. The trial of Christians before a Roman governor was a great opportunity for propaganda, when they could confess Christ before the rulers of the world (Lampe 1981:72). "First" in verse 10 is to be understood as "before the end." It is appropriate to view the "governors" and "kings" in verse 9 as "Gentiles," and the Jewish local courts and synagogues as the Jews in Palestine and throughout the Diaspora as well (Gundry 1993:739).

The persecuted will be given the proper words by the Holy Spirit at the very moment of trial (13:11). If this activity of the Spirit is the only allusion to the role of the Spirit in the church according to Mark's Gospel (Hare 1996:171), it implies a crucial significance of the work of the Spirit in relation to the persecuted for the sake of Jesus. The final result is "exactly what the persecutors want to prevent: the good news is proclaimed to all nations and becomes known everywhere" (Iersel 1998:398). Although it is true that persecution is a sign of opposition to God, it nevertheless plays a positive function in the divine plan as if persecution and proclamation are inseparable (Hare 1996:171; cf. Keener 1997:206).
been brought before the leaders. Von Campenhausen is surely correct in rejecting this second view, that *marturion* refers to the proclamation, and insisting on the objective nature of the "witness." The parallel passage of Matt 24:14 makes it quite clear that *marturion* refers not to the fact of persecution, as von Campenhausen avers, but to the fact that the proclamation has been made (Weinrich 1981:19-20).

However, Weinrich seems to miss an aspect when his view is compared to views discussed earlier, such as Gundry's argument, in this section. YK Lee's response to his view above is worth noting:

I would say Weinrich should have discussed the second view more carefully. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the confession of the disciples at the time of persecution and trial should be understood as an intense form of testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the prophetic proclamation of the gospel truth in situations of persecution and trial should be included in the discussion of the content of *marturion*. Weinrich later acknowledges this fact unwittingly when he discusses the prophetic gift at the time of persecution and suffering (Weinrich 1981:20ff.). Jesus promised His disciples that they would be given the gift of the prophet at the time of persecution and trial (Mt 10:19-20; Mk 13; 11; Lk 12; 11, 21:14-15) (YK Lee 1999:221).

From the biblical context of Matt 10:16-23, it is clear now that the Holy Spirit is active in the lives of Jesus' followers at times of persecution. Further, it is to be noted that the activity of the Spirit in the midst of Christian suffering and persecution aims to relate to the giving of proclamation of the good news. The witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ may bring about suffering and persecution. However, there is an important implication in the passage. The witness of the disciples not only brings about opposition and persecution in reaction to it, but also provides them with another opportunity to witness to governors and kings and the Gentiles. The Spirit of the Father will speak through the persecuted Christians, as the text suggests.
that persecution of Christian communities plays a significant role in God's strategic plan for the kingdom mission.

It is worthy to note that the spread of the gospel of the kingdom was furthered after rejection by the Jews of the proclamation. Valiquette is right in his criticism of Ukpong's argument on the scope of the mission of the disciples in Matt 10. In responding to Ukpong's (1995:437-448) argument that Jesus' earthly ministry was "exclusive," that is, focused on his own people, Valiquette (1998:438) argues that the fact that expansion of the gospel to Gentiles was originally intended may be understood only in the sense that the plan would be accomplished only after the rejection of the Jews and this plan is laid in accordance with God's will. Hence, he points out the central importance of rejection in Matthew 10. As the text shows, the disciples, who were sent by Jesus, would be rejected, flogged in synagogues, and handed over to kings and governors. However, a significant point is that persecution of the disciples resulted in witnesses to the Gentiles (Matt 10:18). Rejection and persecution will accompany the opportunity to witness to Jesus by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Another aspect to be included in our discussion is the significance of the work of the Spirit in a persecution context in terms of eschatological importance. Weinrich's comment on the eschatological significance of persecution of the disciples in the context of Matt 10 is worthy to note for the current discussion. He comments on the matter thus:

The proper and required words shall be given the disciples "in that hour." The appearance of the disciples before governors and kings is not the issue of adverse fate but possesses eschatological significance. First of all, the disciples have been led before rulers on account of Christ. The persecution they suffer has no value in itself. It is only because they are Christ's messengers (Matt 10:5,16) and his servants (Matt 10:24-25) that they suffer at all. The persecution of the disciples is in principle persecution against Christ himself (cf. Acts 9:4,5). Secondly, the disciples stand before the rulers "for a witness to them and the Gentiles" (Matt 10:18; cf. Mark 13:9). The meaning of this phrase has been much discussed. Von Campenhause argues that 

marturion

refers to the fact that the authorities have persecuted the disciples instead of listening to them, a fact which will provide proof at the judgment that they are guilty. It founds the divine judgment. Others have seen in 

marturion

a reference to the missionary proclamation of the disciples. It is for proclamation that the disciples have
It is interesting to note that the work of the Spirit in persecution is followed by the statement on the relationship between the response of the persecuted to persecution and their salvation (Matt 10:22). Verse 22 says, "You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved." According to the text, the fact that Christians will be persecuted does not simply guarantee the salvation of the persecuted. Salvation requires their steadfast response to their call (10:5-15) and to faith in the Lord Jesus (10:22). Only those who endure through the persecutions will be in the presence of the Lord Jesus in the end. In the context, Jesus then is not talking about a universal salvation, but about the salvation in which the faithful will find life (Morris 1992:257). The serious importance of the steadfast response to the faith is further affirmed by Matt 10:32-33: "Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven."

Here, it is to be assumed that the Spirit's help in giving inspired speech before those who persecute the followers of Jesus will include the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus. God's provision through the Spirit in time becomes the fundamental foundation upon which the persecuted Christians hold fast their faith in the Lord, without abandoning themselves to the denial of Jesus. The Spirit's work of speaking through the persecuted Christians and the believers' faithful response to the Lord in the context of persecution will result in salvation of the faithful.

Another point that is to be made is that Matthew wants to speak of the expansion of the scope of the mission of the disciples, which is produced by persecution. Matt 10:18, "You will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to 'them' and the 'Gentiles'," notes the transference of the mission scope. The mission was limited to the Jews at the beginning (cf. Matt 10:6), but it is now expanded to include Gentiles (Matt 10:18). An interesting point is that this expansion was accomplished by rejection of Jewish courts and synagogues. The sufferings of the disciples would be the means by which the Christian message would be proclaimed to Gentiles (Morris 1992:254). In other words, Matthew's arrangement of Jesus' instructions shows the intended plan of God in terms of "the historical transference of the kingdom from Israel to the church" (cf. 21:43) (Gundry 1994:192). That the expansion of the gospel of the kingdom of God was, ironically, developed by severe persecution of Christian communities is clearly revealed in the Acts of the Apostles. Hence, persecution of Christians is to be understood in terms of the sovereignty of God. It is obvious
"To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit" (1 Cor 12:8). Thus, the charismatic word of wisdom is promised for the persecuted Christians who stand for the name of Jesus (Rea 1992:126-127). A particular instance of the fulfilment of the promise is Peter. He experienced this manifestation when he and John were standing before the council of the Jewish Sanhedrin (Acts 4:5-8). Being filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter boldly proclaimed Jesus Christ and eternal salvation to the leaders and priests in the council. The members of the council realized that Peter was uneducated, but was still talking to them in a marvellous speech inspired by the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8-14, 21).

Gundry recognizes that the passage clearly emphasizes that it is not the disciples, but the Holy Spirit himself who gives the message to the disciples in the time of persecution. He argues that the fact that Matthew adds the phrase "that speaks in you" to "the Spirit" and uses the grammatical emphasis of "not you...but the Spirit," implies the intention to emphasize that the Holy Spirit is the subject of the giving of utterance. He also argues that the utterance is divine provision for the sake of the persecuted. Matthew's emphasis on the nature of the utterance as God's provision is supported by the phrase "of your Father" that is not paralleled in Mark and Luke (Gundry 1994:193). However, it is to be recognized that the disciples in such situations are not mere passive instruments as to the reception of the speech from the Spirit of the Father (Morris 1992:255). In the broad context of chapter 10, it is clear that the devoted life of the persecuted belonging to the Lord in face of persecution is ultimately involved in the affairs of the work of the Spirit for their sake (particularly, 10:32, 39).

Gundry further classifies the reasons for the disciples not to fear the definite coming persecution in the course of proclamation of the gospel of Jesus thus:

the solidarity in suffering of the disciples and their master (vv. 24-25), the impossibility of hiding the truth (vv. 26-27), the paltriness of physical martyrdom compared with eternal punishment of the whole person (v. 28), the value God the Father places on Jesus' disciples (vv. 29-31), the necessity of confessing Jesus before men in order to be confessed by him before God the Father (vv. 32-33), the unworthiness of anyone who draws back through fear of personal abuse (vv. 34-39), and the conveyance of eternal life in Christ through such costly ministry (vv. 40-42) (Gundry 1994:191).
limit its scope to biblical documents other than Pauline texts. As mentioned earlier, Pauline literature and his life experience of suffering will be extensively examined in the next chapter.

2.2.1 Synoptic gospels

2.2.1.1 The gospel according to Matthew

Matthew chapter 10 documents a specific context where the work of the Holy Spirit in the midst of Christian suffering and persecution is stated. The context Matt 10 presents is particularly related to the mission of the twelve disciples of Jesus. When Jesus summoned his twelve disciples to send them out, he gave them "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness" (10:1). Then Jesus instructed his disciples to proclaim the good news: "The kingdom of heaven has come near" (10:7). With this instruction to his disciples, Jesus also told them that they would meet persecution in the course of proclamation of the kingdom of heaven: "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles" (10:16-18).

Here in this particular context, it is notable that the persecution of the disciples results ultimately from their witness to Jesus and the kingdom of God (Gundry 1994:191). Interestingly, it is to be acknowledged that Jesus pronounces a promise of the work of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the persecution. Jesus said to his disciples that "When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you" (Matt 10:19-20). This is a very interesting passage concerning the work of the Spirit in a given context of persecution.

The text (10:19-20) suggests that when the disciples publicly represented Jesus, the Spirit was also active for their sake. Probably Joel's prophecy of Spirit-inspired speech is engaged here (France 1985:183). Accordingly, Keener (1997:206-207) interprets "the Spirit of your Father" in verse 20 as "the Spirit of prophecy." The speech in the context may be considered as the charismatic manifestation of a word of wisdom that is also found in other biblical text:
should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: For he is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion has no end. He delivers and rescues, he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth; for he has saved Daniel from the power of the lions” (6:25b-27).

In the narrative, it is noticed that when his people suffered persecution for their steadfast faith in him, God sent an angel to rescue his people in danger. God intervened through an angel. The story emphasizes that Daniel is a model Jew in the keeping of the law, even in the face of death. The text makes it clear that the faith of the Jews will be proven in their trouble coming in one-way or another (Redditt 1999:113). Smith-Christopher (1996:90) points out that Daniel' being thrown in the lions' pit is a symbol of the exile experience of the Jews. Then the story draws attention to the experience of the Jews in the Diaspora. Anderson (1984:72) points out that the story of Daniel provides hope to the reader. The reader gets to hold hope, not in terms of certain means of deliverance but of their attitude to life in a given context of trouble made by their faith in the Lord. Belief in resurrection (12:2-3) provides a ground to reply to the present experience of suffering for their faith.

A concluding observation is that Daniel's story is relevant to our discussion in the sense that God favours steadfast faith in him and enacts salvation for them in their suffering and persecution for their faith in him.

2.2 The Spirit and suffering in the New Testament

The New Testament presents rich documents for discussion on the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution. The New Testament reveals the nature of the cross of Jesus Christ as an essential component of the Christian life from the very inception of Christianity. The world's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah who was to come as prophesied in Old Testament, led Christians into severe persecution and even to death.

This section will be devoted to the survey of various New Testament texts that document the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian suffering and persecution. Christian communities were inseparable from the experience of persecution. Almost every book in the New Testament contains the notion of Christian suffering and persecution. In the survey, this section will
God. He understands this fourth figure as Jesus. However, to Walvoord (1971:91) it is hard to understand that a pagan king could recognize Jesus. Most probably, Redditt's (1999:71) interpretation that the fourth figure is an angel of God is correct, as supported by verse 28. Here, an angel could be understood as a guardian angel by the textual help of 12:1 in which Michael is mentioned as Israel's protector (Redditt 1999:72). 5 Ironically, the story ends with the foreign king's praise of God: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God" (3:28).

For our discussion on the role of the Spirit in the persecution of God's people, however, the passage does not provide direct help because it is hard to interpret the fourth figure as the Spirit of God. Only a point that might be relevant to our discussion is that God favours the faithful to him and aids them in their danger. Another point that interests us is that the story in Daniel 3 is a message to assure the promise of resurrection of martyrs who have kept their faith in the Lord (Redditt 1999:73). Facing martyrdom, people are assured of the "everlasting life" (12:2) provided by God who is superior over the Babylonian divinities.

Daniel 6 provides a relevant story for our discussion. A trial has come to Daniel. He distinguished himself above all the other presidents and satraps because an "excellent spirit" was in him, and the king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom of Babylon. The stories in Daniel 1 to 6 emphasize that superior wisdom is given by God to his faithful servants. The conviction of the superiority of the God of the Jews meets a confrontation from the Gentiles (Collins 1975:218-34). So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king Darius and told him that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human except to him, shall be thrown into a den of lions (6:7). Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued to pray to God (6:10). As they expected, the conspirators found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. Daniel's disobedience to the king's interdict was reported to the king and Daniel was put into the den of lions. However, the next day the king found Daniel had come to no harm. Daniel said to the king, "My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong" (6:22). The story ends with the foreign king's praise of God: "May you have abundant prosperity! I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people
friends in the book is highly respected. Their faithful devotion to God is favoured by him and
he sends an angel to rescue them from danger (Dan 3:28; 6:22). With this in mind, further
discussions as to the relationship between God's activities in his people's suffering are
developed below.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Jerusalem and brought some of the vessels of the
house of God to the land of Shinar and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods (Dan 1:1-
2). According to chapter 3, the king made a golden statue and set it up on the plain of Dura in
the province of Babylon. At the dedication of the golden statue, the people were commanded
to worship the golden statue. Whoever did not worship the statue would immediately be
thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. Then it was reported that Daniel's friends, Shadrach,
Meshach, and Abednego did not worship the gods of Babylon and the golden statue. They
were to be thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. In that situation, however, they told King
Nebuchadnezzar that "If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of
blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. But if not, be it known to you, O
king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have
set up" (3:17-18). The three friends of Daniel were willing to die rather than to worship the
gods of the king. There is a conflict between their fidelity to God and the necessity of
disobeying the order of the king in order to keep their fidelity to God. They were bound tight
and thrown into the furnace. Then God favoured their uncompromising fidelity and rescued
them from danger.

In the narrative, 3:28 speaks of an "angel" sent by God to deliver the three young men. The
concept of angel is not solely belonging to Jewish community. An angel is prominent at
Ugarit and in Greek literatures (Collins 1993:191). The king saw four men unbound, walking
in the middle of the fire, and they were not hurt. The king saw that the fourth man had the
appearance of a god (3:25). The interpretation of the phrase "the appearance of a god" in 3:25
has been disputed. The appearance of the fourth is like a divine being. The divine being
could be literally rendered "a son of a god." In Semitic idiom, the phrase is understood as a
member of the class "gods" and this concept is well known in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Gen 6;
Ps 29:1). In Jewish and Christian tradition, the "sons of God" are treated as angels. Collins
(1993:190) likes to interpret the phrase "the appearance of a god" as "a messianic king,"
although he admits that the term "messiah" is not engaged. Miller (1994:123-124) interprets
the phrase as "the son of God," because the word ʿĒl-hî n could be used as a proper name for
The idea that the Spirit-filled prophets might suffer for their message inspired by the Spirit of God continued to remain in the Christian community (e.g. Matt 23:29-36; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 13:33-34; Acts 7:52; 1 Thess 2:15; Heb 11:36-38). Ironically, the false prophets were favoured by people, while the true prophets were disliked (e.g. Jer 23:9-22). The false prophets were liked by people because they participated in the people's sin instead of leading them from it (cf. Luke 6:22-23, 26). On the other hand, it was hard for the true prophets to practice it because the true prophet was the one whose own life was an "embodiment of God's truth" (Goldingay 1994:50). The deaths of John the Baptist and of Jesus himself were at least partly understood in light of this tradition (cf. Matt 14:5; Mark 9:12-13). The early Christian community was also expected to meet violent opposition as the Spirit-filled prophetic community (Acts 4:3; 5:18) (Weinrich 1981:2). Opposition and persecution do not mean signs of God's disapproval. They are the evidence of the authentic prophets (Cunningham 1997:312).

In conclusion, the role of the Spirit in suffering and persecution in the prophetic tradition may be summarized as follows. The prophets of God in the Old Testament worked as the agents of God delivering the messages from God by the inspiration of the Spirit. Then they suffered persecution and opposition from the stiff-necked people of God. The prophets were the bearers of the Spirit to which the evidence was that they had the Spirit-inspired words of God. The ultimate purpose of the Spirit-inspired words was to bring salvation to God's people. However, the people's response to the messages was persecution and opposition against the messengers. Hence, the Spirit's work is not estranged from a persecution context. The Spirit's role in the persecution context is to bring the salvation message to the people of God.

2.1.2 Daniel

Daniel's story is relevant to stories of New Testament Christians in terms of the similarity of the nature of persecution of Daniel and his friends due to their steadfast expression of their faith in God. A relevant aspect from the Book of Daniel to our discussion is that an individual's decisive commitment to God is a crucial element in the sovereign rule of God. In the Book of Daniel, God is viewed as hidden and mysterious and he is known to the wise through special revelation. His sovereign control of human history in a long-term plan seems to be deterministic. However, his sovereign rule over human affairs still allows the freedom of human beings (Collins 1992:34). Hence, the steadfast commitment of Daniel and his
Weinrich's statement on the role of the Spirit in persecution with regard to the Old Testament and pre-Christian Jewish literatures seems hard to accept. He mentions:

The Old Testament contains several stories of the persecution of God's Spirit-filled prophets. Twice it reports of the actual murder of prophets. By the time of the New Testament, persecution and probable martyrdom of the prophet, who spoke the words of the Spirit, had become a formal element in stories about the prophets.... However, in pre-Christian Jewish martyrological writings the Spirit plays virtually no role.... When the early Christian community was faced with the necessity of reflecting upon the Spirit's activity in persecution and martyrdom, therefore, it could receive only very limited assistance from its Jewish heritage. Beyond the prophetic tradition in which the Spirit-filled prophet is often put to suffering and death by God's enemies, the Spirit plays virtually no role in contexts of persecution and martyrdom in pre-Christian Jewish literature (Weinrich 1981:10-11).

It is hard to agree with Weinrich when he says the Spirit plays no role in the contexts of persecution. An instance may be given with the story of the prophet Zechariah. 2 Chron 24:20 states that "Then the Spirit of God took possession of Zechariah the son of the priest Jehoiada; he stood above the people and said to them, 'Thus says God: Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has also forsaken you'" (cf. Neh 9:30). The words of judgment were the words inspired by the Spirit of God who took possession of the prophet. Then the inspired message of judgment led the prophet to persecution and death by the people: "But they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the Lord" (2 Chron 24:21). In this text, the close link between the speech given by the Spirit and persecution context is not to be ignored. The story recalls the similarity with the case of Stephen's death in the Acts of the Apostles. Before he was killed, he, as being filled with the Spirit, testified to the fact of the wrong doing of the Jews against the Messiah. That resulted in his death. Hence, it is more appropriate to comment that the Old Testament is limited in providing the documents that show the Spirit's role in a more specified context, when compared to the New Testament texts. However, this does not mean that in Old Testament texts there is no role of the Spirit in a persecution context.
The Old Testament often characterizes the Israelites as obstinate people (e.g. Exod 33:3, "Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, or I would consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people," New Revised Standard Version). The Israelites often failed to show that they really belonged to God's covenant. Jeremiah describes people to whom the word of God is an object of scorn as having uncircumcised ears (Jer 6:10). Such stiff-necked attitude toward the word of God was particularly seen in resisting the Holy Spirit: "But they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit; therefore he became their enemy; he himself fought against them" (Isa 63:10). However, the Spirit of God still has been perceived as speaking through the prophets. Hence, the idea that the responsibility for the deaths of the prophets is attributed to the Jewish people has been alluded to in the tradition of Judaism (1 Kgs 19:10; 14; Neh 9:26; Jer 26:20-24; Luke 6:23; 11:49; 13:34; 1 Thess 2:15; Heb 11:36-38) (I.H. Marshall 1980:147).

In Jewish literature, the Martyrdom of Isaiah is an example of the idea that the Spirit-filled prophet of God suffers on account of his message. Isaiah gave prophecy of judgment upon King Manasseh and his kingdom (Mart. Isa. 3:6-10). The prophecy was given by the Spirit to Isaiah to deliver (Mart. Isa. 1:7). The prophet Isaiah was arrested and killed by Manasseh with many accusations of Belchira, because of his message from God. Thus, Isaiah's speech brought opposition from the listeners and he was persecuted, ending his life with martyrdom (Barnstone 1984:150-151). The historicity of the tradition of the martyrdom of Isaiah is generally admitted (Hess 1992:507-508). Ironically, the prophet suffered persecution and opposition because he was inspired by the Spirit of God to deliver the message from God to the people of God. Thus, the prophet suffered persecution because he was the bearer of the Spirit (Weinrich 1981:8).

The Wisdom of Solomon (2:12-20) illustrates the envy and guilt that prompted the persecution of the righteous by the unrighteous. Persecution for religious reasons has been seen from Elijah's period (1 Kgs 19:10). The main reason for the persecution in a religious aspect is that the person devoted to Yahweh refused syncretism that issued from the royal policy, criticized social injustice practiced by the high class in the society, and brought a judgment message upon pagan immoralities. Prophets suffered persecution severely by the hands of the ruling classes because they did not compromise truth of the words of God and foretold judgment coming to Israel due to the ruling classes' practice of social injustice and of idolatry (e.g. 2 Chr 36:15-16) (Elwell 1988:1646).
Neh 9:26; Jer 2:30). This theme is advanced in the writings of Second Temple Judaism as well as in the codified rabbinic tradition. Finally the New Testament reflects this conception of Israel's persecution of her prophets in a number of passages in the Gospels, epistles and Revelation (Cunningham 1997:308).

Old Testament texts mentioned above reveal that the prophets of God were objects of hatred and opposition from the rulers of Israel and the Israelites. The prophets were hated and rejected by the people of Israel, although their messages were in fact words "for" the benefit of the people. Ironically, the prophetic words from the mouth of the prophets were the words inspired by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of the Lord was active in giving inspiration to the prophets (e.g. 1 Kgs 22:24; Neh 9:30; Hos 9:7; Joel 2:28, 29; Mi 3:8; cf. 1 Chr 12:18; 2 Chr 15:1; 20:14; 24:20) (Elwell 1988:1782). However, the destiny of Spirit-filled prophets was rejection and opposition from the people of Israel.

The prophets delivered to the Israelites God's message of coming judgment. The messages of judgment were to be understood in context where salvation was another side of the message. However, the Israelites did not understand that the salvation message coincided with the judgment message. Salvation would come about upon their repentance from their sins against God in terms of their infidelity to God, and against their neighbours in terms of their practice of injustice toward their neighbours. Pre-exilic prophetic messages (e.g. Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Hosea) typically feature this. Hence, none of the canonical prophets had achieved a popular success in terms of having a large following. They failed to immediately win the hearers' hearts (Schmitt 1992:487).

However, it is certain that in Jewish religious thought, God made known his word and himself through the prophets to his people. God selected and sent the prophets to deliver his words to his people. Thus, prophets were those called by God for a special task of bringing God's words to his people. A prophet was also called "seer" (Newsome 1984:2, 8). Here, the implication is that the prophet understands and knows what words God wants to communicate to his people. The prophet was called with high perception given by God so that they could do the task of delivering God's message to his people. The prophet's capability of perception was far superior to that of the common Israelites because the Lord inspired them to become vehicles to deliver his message (Elwell 1988:1781).
2.1.1 Prophets

The prophets understood themselves to be inspired by God and to speak the word of God to the people of God. The most common evidence of this conviction is the ever-recurring phrase "Thus says the Lord" in Old Testament prophetic books (e.g. Isa 1:11; 7:7; Jer 2:2; Ezek 28:6; Amos 1:3, etc.). It is commonly accepted that Old Testament prophets suffered for speaking words of judgment. Accordingly, the Old Testament presents the view that the Israelites had repeatedly rejected the prophets of God and had killed them (Jer 7:25-26; 18:18; 25:4; Lam 2:20; Neh 9:26; 2 Kgs 17:13-14, etc.). The Old Testament presents two prophets who died by violent means. Jeremiah speaks of the prophet Uriah who was killed by the sword of King Jehoiakim (Jer 26:20-23). Another example is Zechariah ben Jehoiada. He was murdered by King Joash (2 Chr 24:17-22; Matt 23:35). Obadiah hid a hundred prophets in a cave to save them from Jezebel (1 Kgs 18:4, 13). The prophet Elijah fled to Mount Horeb to save his life from Jezebel (1 Kgs 19:1-14). The prophet Jeremiah was beaten and imprisoned (Jer 20:2; 37:15; 38:1-6).

Jeremiah delivered the message of judgment upon sinful Israel, in which Yahweh planned to destroy sinful Judah in order to set the stage for a new beginning with the people. The imagery of the potter and the clay was used in the prophet's delivery of the judgment message (Jer 18:1-11). As the potter would destroy a vessel which had been spoiled on the potter's wheel in order to form it into a perfect object, Yahweh was going to destroy sinful Judah for their wrongdoing before him. That was the message given by God (cf. Jer 18:6, 11). Jeremiah's criticism of the Temple priests' rituals and of the people's persistent evil doing received immediate violent reaction from the hearers. An atmosphere of confrontation had been set between Jeremiah and the religious and political leaders. The opposition and persecution continued to the end of Jeremiah's ministry and at times the prophet was imprisoned (Newsome 1984:109-110).

Cunningham summarizes the aspects of persecution of the prophets of God in the Hebrew literature thus:

In the Hebrew Scriptures not only are there numerous examples of specific cases of persecution of individual prophets, but also the whole of Israel's history is summarized in the general terms of the nation persecuting God's messengers (2 Chron 36:15-16;
CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL OVERVIEW ON THE SPIRIT AND SUFFERING

There are several obvious places to look for biblical interpretation on the role of the Spirit in suffering and persecution of God's people. This chapter seeks to survey some biblical texts that are relevant to the discussion and may shed light on the Spirit's role in suffering and persecution. In doing so, the scope of "suffering" will be limited to sufferings that the people of God experience because of their faith in the Lord. Hence, a broad concept of sufferings will be excluded in the survey of biblical data on the subject. As defined in the first chapter, suffering which is to be discussed in this dissertation will be mainly that of which context is relevant to the devoted faith in the Lord of those who suffer for his sake.

It is necessary for a wider survey of relevant biblical texts as to what they reveal on the role of the Spirit in suffering and persecution before a thorough examination of the theme in Pauline texts is made. It is hoped the survey may provide coherent support for the study on the theme in Pauline texts. This chapter will survey biblical texts relevant to the theme other than Pauline texts. Since Pauline texts provide significant basis on which the search for the role of the Spirit in Christian suffering may be studied and manifest, the next whole chapter will be devoted to the examination of Pauline texts on the theme. Hence, this present chapter will survey Old Testament texts and New Testament texts relevant to the theme, excluding Pauline texts.

2.1 The Spirit and suffering in the Old Testament

From the Old Testament, the writer has chosen the prophets and Daniel for the current discussion on the subject. The reasons for the selection of the prophets and Daniel are as follows: firstly, they themselves experienced sufferings—prophets as the messengers who were given special tasks by God and Daniel because of his commitment to his faith in the Lord God; and secondly, they are charismatic representatives in the Old Testament who experienced special manifestations of God. The prophets suffered persecution in their homeland because of their particular and personal devotion to Yahweh. Daniel suffered at the hands of an alien nation, for similar devotion to Yahweh.